Mr Lecretary:

Since The Commissation last hight was rather second, and I will not be there to morrow

Since The commisation last hight was rather served, and I will not be there to morrow I but I ame it to you and to the President to set both my wims on this healter as successfy as famille. They are as fallows.

- 1. The existence of Saint MRBN bares in Cuba Cannot be tolerated. In objection therefore is their elemention by behaven were way be received.
- 2 They we two hears in earner. ke) by cliftenate action or (6) by hubitary actions.
- 3 his one can quant granute that this can be achieved by differents action but it recent that this channel he had be tested out work hubbary action is conflowed. If our devices in from (and it hunt be) I can su no change in Communication with tareshelve friently worded in such a way that he reships that he hundred him hundred.
- 4. This of consider an executal brist stip too hutter what hubiting comes one eletermine on

- SCRET

Top com

5. I don't had so strongly about a muse to Castro + this could be chopped.

• •

6. hy cloud concern about a study outhout any differentic effect is that it will mendally last to war with cuba + mailed not be the liter that heart greek chifored of their hairs as mas sugested. I with line I am mas makly certain that the allied machine would be deal against us, enfecially if the cause retained locally (as stain Tunky or Judy or in Berlin).

7. a commisation to sample would be very unful for the record in establishing our care be action.

F. In several I bed that a declaration of war would be valuable ruce it would after up two aneum of hubban action - an state, we will one allocable. But in much have to hade a can be our allis to justify ruch a declaration of war. But if we acted find and ranged to justify it beter we would be in a refet of great consequence.

9. Imaly I feel very strongly that are behalf in a buntil quade active is an illuming and would had us into a full man with

Since The commentation last hight was rather served, and I will not be there tomorrow I but I ame it to your and to the President to set forth my wims on this health as succently as harable. They are as follows.

- 1. The exection of Samuel MRBN bases in Cuba Cannot be tolerated. Jue objection therefore is their elementers by whatever were many be many.
- 2 They are two hears in escence. ke) by clifferente action a (6) by hubitary actions.
- I has one can grand guarante that
 this can be achimid by deflorate action.
 but it reem to me inential that this
 cleared should be tested out where his being
 action is confloyed. I am decion in from
 (and it hours be) I can so danger
 in communicating unto lareshabely friently
 worded in such a way that he realizes count
 her hours business.
- 4. This I consider an executal limit step too health what hubting come an eletermine on if the riphy is unals unsatisfacting. The time of their riphy will little as something but a class it believe a classif seminal hundred to war should alter us. If he man it, he mander have so reacted when if the strike had come first

6. my club concern about a study outhout any deflorate effect is that it will mentily lead to war with Cuba + mould not be the that heat quick chifored of their haves as was sugested. I with line I am was neally Certain that the allied reaction would be dead against us, inficially if the Cannt retained locally (" s storm Tunky or deally or in Berlin). 7. a commisation to sample would be very uniful for the record in establishing am care be action. 8. In several I but that a declaration of war mound be valuable suce it would after up every aneme of hubitary action - an stutes, enum or blochade. But we would have to have a case lefor com allies to justify such a declaration of war. But of we acted find and ranget to furthy at later we would be in a stat of great consequence. 9. Imaky I but my strongly that may behaf in a buntil quade active is an illumy and would had us into a bull was with Cuba on a step by step basis which would qually increase the bumbly of cured war. The but come in my win would be a combally mended a serious letter to toutoh + when the refly is received (if it is communifacting) Comment with an freshel allies to inform them

of our satures - they are toyer for a diclaration of war. until a sentill statement of the reason and all cognizants hisparatities have excure the limiterating but it here to timboto have it tigled Tolf the Breanding ashs about my of um the well consider it. Good lick Charles Elsaber 4.2.2. There are of Come many other angles - land the above seen to we the essentel, I don't quite me the usincy of tulitary action - -I leaken the lave already meeted alphonetic action are abouted he after theuthe it is The contract of the contract o The sa Later of the Second the state of the s - white SECRET

(Copy of hand-written memorandum)

Mr. Secretary:

Since the conversation last night was rather general, and I will not be there tomorrow I feel I owe it to you end to the President to set forth my views on this matter as succinctly as possible. They are as follows.

- 1. The existence of Soviet MREM bases in Cuba cannot be tolerated. The objective therefore is their elimination by whatever means may be necessary.
- They are two means in essence: (a) by diplomatic action or
 by military action.
- 3. No one can guarantee that this can be achieved by diplomatic action—out it seems to me essential that thus channel should be tested out before military action is employed. If our decision is firm (and it must be) I can see no danger in communicating with Knrushchev privately worded in such a way that he realizes that we mean business.
- 4. This I consider an essential first step no matter what military course we determine on if the reply is unsatisfactory. The tone and tenor of his reply will tell us something out I don't believe a threat of general nuclear war should deter us. If he means it, he would have so reacted even if the strike had come first.
- 5. I don't reel so strongly about a message to Castro and this could be dropped.
- o. My chief concern about a strike without any diplomatic effort is that it will inevitably lead to war with Cuba and would not be the neat quick disposal of their bases as was suggested. Furthermore I am reasonably certain that the Allied reaction would be dead against us, especially if the Soviet retaliated locally (vs. Turkey or Italy or in Berlin).
- 7. A communication to Khrushchev would be very useful for the record in establishing our case for action.
- 8. In general I feel that a declaration of war would be valuable since it would open up every avenue of military action—air strike, invasion or blockade. But we would have to make a case before our Allies to justify such a declaration of war. But if we acted first and sought to justify it later we would be in a spat of great consequences.

9. Finally

SECRE OFOR





-2-

9. Finally I feel very strongly that any belief in a limited quick action is an illusion and would lead us into a full war with Cuba on a step-by-step basis which would greatly increase the possibility of general war.

The best course in my view would be a carefully worded and serious letter to Khrushchev and when the reply is received (if it is unsatisfactory) communicate with our principal Allies to inform them of our intention and then ask Congress for a declaration of war with a suitable statement of the reason and all adequate (appropriate?) preparations.

Please excuse the handwriting but I have no time to have it typed. If the President asks about my opinion this will constitute it. Good luck.

Charles E. Bohlen

There are of course many other angles but the above seem to me the essentials. I don't quite see the urgency of military action—if it leaks and we have already initiated diplomatic action we should be able to handle it.

CEORET CHOR